DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 319 935 CE 054 886

TITLE Training and Enterprise Councils: Partnerships and Action.
INSTITUTION Further Education Unit, London (England).
PUB DATE Mar 90
NOTE 9p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Cooperative Programs; Educational Cooperation; Education Work Relationship; Foreign Countries; Outcomes of Education; *School Business Relationship; School Community Relationship; *Shared Resources and Services; Vocational Education; Voluntary Agencies
IDENTIFIERS *Great Britain; Training and Enterprise Councils

ABSTRACT

This document reports on a Further Education Staff College (FESC) seminar to encourage partnership between the new Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), Local Education Authorities (LEAs), and further education colleges in Britain. A TEC is defined as a member of a public and private partnership, involving government, business, and voluntary organizations that share the risks, resources, and benefits in a way that makes effective use of limited resources and produces benefits neither partner could produce alone. The principal objective of the seminar was to develop a clearer understanding of the nature of the relationship between TECs, LEAs, and colleges through identifying the overall requirements of the TEC system, progress to date, useful strategies employed, and pitfalls to be avoided; creative opportunities for partnership and developing appropriate strategies for realizing the benefits of such opportunities; and opportunities for collaboration. The bulletin quotes extracts from formal presentations and provides a summary of the working groups and a checklist of issues relating to good practice and pitfalls to be avoided. Appendix A lists 15 relevant publications. Appendix B provides extracts from the Merseyside TEC Initiative. (CML)

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This bulletin presents a report of a joint Further Education Unit (FEU)/Further Education Staff College (FESC) Seminar held on 11/12 January 1990. The aim was to encourage partnership between the new Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs), the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and the further education colleges. The seminar took place at a time when the early TECs were preparing their business and corporate plans.

Training and Enterprise Councils: Partnerships and Action

Objectives

The principal objective of the seminar was to develop a clearer understanding of the nature of the relationship between TECs, LEAs and colleges through identifying:

- the overall requirements of the TEC system, progress to date, useful strategies employed and pitfalls to be avoided;
- creative opportunities for partnership and developing appropriate strategies for realising the benefits of such opportunities;
- the opportunities for collaboration.

Format of the Seminar

To give the maximum opportunity for collaboration and partnership to be identified and to emerge, the participants worked in groups for the majority of the seminar. On the first day they worked in single interest groups and looked at the issues from both their own perspective and that of the other parties, while on the second they worked in mixed interest groups. There were two formal inputs on each day, to set the scene and provide additional information for the working groups discussions. Participants were asked to identify issues relating to good practice in the establishment of TEC/LEA/college partnerships, and pitfalls to be avoided, as guidance to later TEC developments.

Format of this bulletin

This bulletin provides basic information relating to the establishment of TECs by quoting extracts from the inputs by the formal speakers. It also provides a discussion of the main points arising from the working groups and a checklist of issues relating to good practice contrasted with pitfalls to be avoided.

Finally there are two appendices, one listing some of the literature relevant to the establishment of TECs, and the other presenting a mission statement from the Merseyside TEC which sets out the role and aims of a TEC as an illustrative example.

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The background inputs

An overview of TEC development

Catherine Stratton, Special Adviser to the Secretary of State for Employment

The keynote speaker at the seminar was Cai Stratton, who emphasised the main points of Sir Norman Fowler's recent speech to the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), namely, that TECs have been set:

- long-term objectives, and are not a 'quick fix' solution;
- national goals, to be delivered locally;
- training aims which transcend traditional divisions;
- measurable aims, setting a course and milestones;
- accountable targets, the reputation of TEC Directors being put on the line;
- responsibility for a move from a supply-led to demand-led training system.

The schedule for setting up the system aimed at having 12-15 TECs in development by December 1989, but development funding had been approved for 51 TECs at the time of the seminar, with 15 more expected by end of March 1990.

TECs are trying to 'do things right', by getting organised, setting up sub-structures and working parties, which are generally chaired by a TEC Director, involving specialists, so that they become aware of, and can take advice from, all sectors. TECS are undertaking market research and needs analysis, and are seeking the support of the community to ensure they have credibility. *TECs are trying to 'do the right things'*, having a remit for training and enterprise, but also considering associated issues, such as their role in the community.

Partnership

A TEC is a member of a public/private partnership, involving government, business and voluntary organisations which share the risks, resources and benefits in a way which:

- makes effective use of limited resources;
- produces benefits neither partner could produce alone.

For partnership to work, there does not need to be exact parity of numbers, but there must be a close match between interests, skills and resources that each partner can contribute and those needed to solve the problem effectively.

In conclusion, Cai Stratton stated that TECS will not succeed if they stand alone. They must limit their role to strategic planning, influencing managers and using partners to deliver training, and can only make effective progress if they use the education and training service to the maximum.

Finally, if the education and training service *'do the things they have always done, they will get the things they always get'.*

The role of the National Training Task Force

Mike Rowarth, member of the Task Force and Principal of Newcastle upon Tyne College of Arts and Technology

The National Training Task Force has the responsibility to oversee the establishment of the TEC system, approve submissions for funding and monitor development. The Task Force is made up of members from the private (10), public (3) and voluntary (2) sectors, but works as at team, with origins forgotten.

The Task Force considers approaches from potential TECs, representing a 100,000-250,000 working population. They are not necessarily coincident with LEA or Area Manpower Board boundaries. Thus individual colleges may have to forge relationships with more than one TEC, and may find considerable differences between the styles of operation, and should develop strategies to deal with such differences.

Mike stated that there were two main reasons behind the TEC initiative:

- the UK industrial investment record, with 17% of Gross National Product spent on plant, but only 8% on post-16 vocational education and training;
- demography: numbers of potential employees in the 16-19 age group are falling, while those in the 25-54 age group are increasing. Thus there will be a reduction in traditional recruits and initial training, and increased retraining and updating will be essential.

Resources

TECs will be given responsibility for developing programmes which are currently managed by the Training Agency. These include the Youth Training Scheme (YTS), Employment Training, Business

Growth Training and also a Local Initiative Fund (LIF). The TEC system will represent a transfer of £3 billion from central to local control for these programmes. The new Employment Secretary, Michael Howard, has also switched some resources previously allocated to enterprise development to the LIF. The degree to which a TEC and its partners use the LIF to attract further funds and finance training programmes beyond the scope of mainstream schemes will, to a large degree, be the factor which most affects the success of the initiative.

Following efforts by TEC Chairs to win more financial freedom, TECs have also recently been given flexibility to spend operating surpluses on any scheme within their agreed business plan, or carry them over to the next financial year, which is almost unprecedented in government circles.

An industrial view

Sir Adrian Cadbury, CBI

Sir Adrian suggested that the TEC initiative had roots in Industry Year 1986, which had established programmes to overcome the two-way gap in communications between industry and the community and promoted the mutual advantages of education and industry working together. It was found that some parents were opposed to their children entering industry, and Industry Year actively worked to overcome their perception that *'education is a way of avoiding industry'*. When the CBI Task Force was set up it used the title 'business' rather than 'industry' to overcome negative attitudes. The Task Force:

- expressed concern at the dismal record on training in UK industry;
- pointed to the need to respond to '1992' and 'demography';
- highlighted the need to create a skills base amongst the school and working population which could be built upon.

Issues

Fundamental issues must not only be the easing of transition from school to work, but also transitions through life, providing retraining and updating as appropriate, and making adequate provision for those with special needs and ensuring access for non-traditional groups.

In Sir Adrian's opinion, TECs will need to concentrate on relationships, meeting the needs of people, relevance, quality and appropriate outcomes. They must also answer the question 'who has the real choice?', and work to ensure 'equality of provision'.

The Somerset TEC: A case study

Jennifer Wisker, Chief Education Officer, Somerset, and member of the TEC Board

The TEC

Jennifer reported that the Somerset TEC priorities were working for growth and prosperity through the development of an economic strategy for the county, the establishment of partnerships and the provision of a forum for consultation. The TEC aims to produce a flexible, adaptable workforce in the county by an adult retraining and updating programme.

The TEC also intends to set up a database of new industries in the county, to provide industrial representatives to assist with college evaluation and to work with education in ensuring quality placements in industry for students and teachers. Finally, it is the intention of the TEC to promote cost-effective training through inter-TEC co-operation when appropriate.

The LEA

The education and training strategy of the LEA is aimed at influencing student attitudes, which are often formed at about the age of 7, and which restrict future opportunities by affecting subject choice at 14, to seek to create a culture for work, learning and training throughout life. They also intend to state and promote the education menu on offer to post-16 students and trainees and so provide flexible education and training, to meet the needs of individuals.

The LEA has been encouraging colleges to consider reorganisation, for example by simulating an industrial situation through linking learning in engineering and construction with that in the business studies departments. The LEA also seeks to develop inter-college co-operation and has set up a TEC mirror group to support the development of the TEC.

Issues

- How does the TEC tackle the issue of 16+ leavers?
- How will the TEC/LEA/colleges make provision for retraining and updating the 20+ age group?

- How will the system deal with the different rules and regulations for education/industry links, e.g., YTS, DTI schemes, TVEI.
- How will a comprehensive and independent guidance/counselling system be provided?
- How can the partners co-operate to make industry attractive to young people?
- How can employers' bodies persuade companies to provide training?

Conclusion

The TEC, LEA and colleges, in partnership, are trying to be proactive, not just reacting to events. They are seeking ways of using the LIF to its fullest effect, and taking an innovative approach to the problems of the county. Already there has been a noticeable increase in morale in the community – a move from a feeling of depression to one of optimism.

The Working Groups – The things we can achieve in and through partnership

What emerged clearly from the single interest groups was the fact that TECs, LEAs and colleges share basic aims and values, but these were buried in misinformation and understandable anxieties. The mixed working groups which contained Chairs or Chief Executives of TECs were able to tackle this and identify an agenda for action to build on the shared values. However, in groups where key TEC delegates had withdrawn, or were unable to stay for the whole seminar, some progress was made towards identifying a positive basis for action, but all doubts could not be allayed. Although TEC board members from LEAs or colleges provided a good deal of insight on how to tackle these problems, TECs are so new that there was no easy substitute for the TEC Chair. Given the range of the TECs' brief, the problem in the working groups highlighted the importance of the points about communication listed below.

Communication

A urgent need for more communication emerged time and again as the first imperative. Such communication must include active listening as well as dissemination from all parties. TECs were urged to establish structures to ensure that educational expertise is used to the full and to avoid 'reinventing wheels'. They were also pressed to operate openly. LEAs were urged to be proactive and to establish single authoritative points of contact with TECs without delay. Colleges were urged to get information from a wide range of sources, including existing Training Agency contacts and College Governors, on TEC developments in their area. Finally, LEAs and colleges were pressed to ensure that information is disseminated throughout their organisations and in the communities they serve.

Partnership

Challenged by Cai Stratton's definition of partnership and by the focus of the conference working groups, members concentrated on the things needed to overcome scepticism and to establish real partnership. Inevitably the first requirement is a genuine desire for partnership. In the face of competition between providers and employers, and the new relationship emerging between LEA and college, it was acknowledged that a desire for partnership may have been obscured. Proactivity was seen as the remedy and suggestions abounded. Increased understanding will depend on paying attention to, and clarifying, motivations, shared values and objectives. One central issue for the college and LEA members of working groups was the need for TEC values to include a commitment to the whole community, including disadvantaged and minority groups.

The working groups also looked at what needed to be done if partnership is to go beyond the cosmetic. Where a TEC has not yet appointed an education representative to its board, it would need to convince the education sector that their lack of representation at board and executive level reflects the need to get senior business people involved in TECs, rather than a desire to keep education out. LEAs need to convince TECs that political considerations can and will be made to serve the provision of quality education and training. Partnership for colleges must mean abandoning either complacency or the use of market forces as a justification for being unable to act collectively with the LEA or other colleges.

The groups identified a range of structural changes needed to underpin partnership. First and foremost, TECs need to ensure that educational partners are included in TEC sub groups. Secondly, roles and remits need clarification. TECs need to stay strategic and eschew involvement in detailed programmes. LEAs need to clarify and deliver confidently their strategic planning role and to develop their capacity to co-ordinate across the whole public education service

within the post-ERA statutory framework. Colleges and to a lesser extent LEAs need to distinguish between their role as provider and their role as adviser to industry and the community.

It was felt that partnership cemented through genuinely shared tasks and joint planning, particularly between LEAs and TECs, would form the foundation for achieving partnership objectives. It was stressed that this was needed both at the level of identifying the mission and in preparing business plans.

Establishing a learning culture

It was agreed that TECs, LEAs and colleges need to engage in a fundamental culture change. For TECs the responsibility focused on stimulating a demand for, and a long-term commitment to, training amongst employers. For colleges and LEAs the responsibility focused on replacing provider-led systems and attitudes with a commitment to putting the needs of customers (actual and potential students, employers, the community and, of course, the TEC) first. Colleges and LEAs need to acknowledge weaknesses and to harness TEC experience and expertise in addressing customer responsiveness. TECs need to use LEA and college expertise in relating to the wider community.

Operational issues

The working groups identified a range of important practical steps to secure the tripartite partnership. 'Fund the dream' summed up concern about commitment. 'Reform learning' provided a similarly pithy admonition about what is to be done for the potential students who would be the outcome of stimulated demand. Particular concern was expressed about careers guidance. The values and assumptions underpinning advice need to be worked through carefully, the practical arrangements and status of the guidance service also need review and enhancement. The importance of a capacity for regional planning extending well beyond individual TEC boundaries was highlighted. Finally, TECs were pressed for early clear and open guidelines on the arrangements for bidding and to take a lead in preparing a partnership approach to quality outcomes. LEAs were urged to trust colleges, to work much more flexibly in future and to market the public sector FE service. Colleges were encouraged to concentrate on quality issues, including consideration of a Total Quality Control approach.

Checklist

Following the discussions at the seminar, this checklist is offered as to guide the development of partnership between TECs, LEAs and FE colleges.

Definition:

> The TEC is a member of a public/private partnership, involving government, business and voluntary organisations which share the risks, resources and benefits in a way which makes effective use of limited resources and produces benefits neither partner could produce alone.
>
> For partnership to work there must be a close match between interests, skills and resources that each partner can contribute and those needed to solve the problem effectively.
>
> (Cai Stratton, speaking at the seminar)

TECs, LEAs and colleges:

- share the same basic aims and values;
- must have a genuine desire for partnership;
- all need to engage in a fundamental culture change;
- need clearly defined roles and remits;
- should cement their partnership through genuinely shared tasks and joint planning;
- in partnership, should be proactive;
- must set up communication systems which include active listening as well as dissemination between all parties;
- need to review and enhance the values, assumptions, practical arrangements and status of the counselling and guidance service;
- seek to develop a partnership approach to quality outcomes;

TECs should:

- establish partnerships and provide a forum for consultation;
- include educational partners in TEC sub groups;
- work for growth and prosperity through the development of an economic strategy for their area;

- limit their role to strategic planning;
- use the LIF to its fullest effect;
- stimulate a demand for, and a long-term commitment to, training amongst employers;
- aim to produce a flexible, adaptable workforce;
- promote cost-effective training through inter-TEC co-operation;
- create mechanisms to ease the school to work transition and ease transitions through life by supporting appropriate retraining and updating;
- ensure access to education, training and employment for non-traditional clients by using LEA and college expertise in relating to the wider community;
- provide industrial representatives to assist with college management and evaluation;
- work with education to ensure quality placements in industry for students and teachers;
- prepare clear and open guidelines on the arrangements for contract bidding.

LEAs should:

- set up a TEC mirror group to support the development of the local TEC;
- establish single points of contact with TECs;
- clarify and deliver their strategic planning role;
- distinguish between their role as provider and their role as adviser and strategic planner;
- develop their capacity to co-ordinate across the whole public education service within the post-ERA statutory framework;
- disseminate information throughout their organisations and in the communities they serve;
- market the public sector FE service;
- be proactive;
- have an education and training strategy which seeks to:
  - influence student attitudes;
  - create a culture for work, learning and training throughout life;
  - promote an education menu to post-16 students/trainees which provides flexible education and training to meet the needs of individuals.

Colleges should:

- keep themselves informed on TEC developments in their area;
- designate one senior member of the college staff to be responsible for liaison with the TEC. It may be helpful for this person to be supported by a member of the board of governors;
- ensure that information is disseminated throughout their organisations and in the communities they serve;
- review mechanisms for consulting with the business community and the community at large;
- provide the TEC Board members with college publicity material and invite them to attend college open events and activities;
- develop strategies to deal with differences between TECs;
- distinguish between their role as provider and their role as adviser to industry and the community;
- co-operate on an inter-college basis wherever this would lead to more effective provision;
- foster a commitment to putting the needs of customers first;
- consider whether current organisational structures support a rapid response to the needs of industry;
- harness TEC experience and expertise in addressing customer responsiveness;
- concentrate on quality issues, including consideration of a 'total quality control' approach, and promote the quality provision they can offer to TECs;
- promote their experience of working with non-traditional clients, e.g., women returners, older people and long-term unemployed, and act as consultants to TECs with respect to making provision for these clients;
- mediate educational developments, e.g., implications of NCVQ, to the TEC and the local business community.

Conclusion – and what next?

The TEC initiative will be a major factor in further education and training for the foreseeable future. It will have a significant impact on the organisation, and, it is hoped, on improved effectiveness, of training to meet the needs of industry and local communities.

This bulletin has outlined the background to the TEC developments and indicated some signposts to action on the part of LEAs and FE colleges. However, since TECs are intended to be *local* developments, there is scope for significant variation from one area to another. Further, the pace of development is so rapid that this bulletin can only give a snapshot at a given time. Everybody involved in TECs should keep up to date by reading government publications and the educational, training and professional press. A list of some sources is given in Appendix A.

FEU and FESC will continue to present relevant information and analyses for the benefit of the FE system in particular. This will include a series of TEC bulletins which will interpret developments from an FE viewpoint and provide case studies. Further, FEU and FESC intend to organise a series of information-giving conferences around the country, and plan further mixed seminars at which representatives of TECs, LEAs and colleges can work together to analyse progress and identify areas of mutual benefit.

For further information about TECs and FE, please contact Albert Clyde at FEU, 2 Orange Street, London WC2A 7WE (tel: 01-321 0433 ext. 236) or David Pardy at FESC, Coombe Lodge, Blagdon, Bristol BS18 6RG (tel: 0761 62503).

For further copies of this bulletin and details of other FEU publications, please contact the FEU Information Centre at the above address (ext. 256).

Appendix A: Relevant publications

'Bring on the Trojan horse' [on why TECs are both a threat and an opportunity] article by John Mcleod in *Education* 1 September 1989.

A Challenging Role for British Business, Department of Employment: Folder containing the following leaflets:

1. A general introduction.
2. A challenging role for British business.
3. Training and Enterprise Councils: a prospectus for the 1990s.

'Developing TECs' in *Unemployment Bulletin* no.30, Summer 1989, Centre for Alternative Industrial and Technological Systems.

Employment for the 1990s, Department of Employment, Cmnd 540, HMSO, 1988.

Guide to the Development of TECs, Training Agency, 1989.

'In defence of TECs' article by Martin Waring in *Transition* September 1989.

Speech of the Rt. Hon. Norman Fowler, Secretary of State for Employment, speaking at the CBI conference, Harrogate, 21 November 1989.

TEC Briefing, Centre for Alternative Industrial and Technological Systems.

TEC Director, Training Agency Journal.

TEC Guide to Planning, Training Agency, 1989.

Training and Enterprise Councils – The Way Forward, Interim report of the Vocational Education and Training Task Force, CBI, 1989.

'Training and Enterprise Councils: What will be the role of the new TECs?' article by John Mcleod in *COIC Newscheck* vol.6 no.7, May 1989.

A Vision for TECs, A Report for Business in the Community, Bain.

Appendix B Extracts from Merseyside TEC Initiative Information Leaflet No 1

THE MERSEYSIDE TEC INITIATIVE

Planning for a better future

This leaflet provides a general report on the establishment of a Merseyside Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) covering Knowsley, Liverpool and Sefton. The TEC nucleus Board has now been established and a chairman identified.

The TEC will not only seek to encourage training by business and for business, but also help young people and the unemployed through training programmes, fostering enterprise and assisting in economic regeneration.

The nucleus Board intends that the TEC will look into the future and assist the regeneration of the community. It recognises that training, vocational education and enterprise development are all strands of a single thread that contribute to economic growth and to personal well-being. The Merseyside TEC will be about developing local solutions to local needs. It will tailor programmes to meet needs of the diverse communities in its localities. The nucleus Board intends that the TEC will be a focus for partnership benefiting the whole community, an enterprise organisation capable of driving radical reform.

THE TIMETABLE

Like other TECs in the county, the Knowsley/Liverpool/Sefton TEC will be a company limited by guarantee. It will be run by a board of directors, totaling 15, led by 10 private sector business leaders. The remaining 5 will come from a range of local interests and organisations which represent the communities in which the business operate – local authorities, trade unions and the voluntary sector, for example.

The timetable of the Board's activities over the next year or so is:

- The development of a submission (the Bid) by January 1990 which identifies the TEC's vision of its role within the community.
- Once the Secretary of State for Employment has approved the submissions, funds will be allocated towards the development of the TEC's Business Plan which should be concluded by September 1990.
- Approval of the Business Plan by the Secretary of State will result in the release of annual funding to finance the Merseyside programme.

THE SCOPE

The development of TECs means that what are now national programmes will come under the direct control of more local bodies. The Merseyside TEC will become directly responsible for:

- Youth Training
- Training for the Adult Unemployed
- Business Growth Training
- Small Firms Counselling
- The Enterprise Allowance Scheme
- Training Access Points
- Trainer Training

The TEC will also have a limited fund for specific local initiatives. The Merseyside TEC will work co-operatively with each of the three local authorities to ensure that training and enterprise match the needs of local communities and contribute to the area's overall economic well-being.

THE MISSION

Despite all the goodwill and effort going into improving education, training and economic performance in the Merseyside area, much more has to be done. Given the circumstances which are unique to this area, plus the challenges faced locally in concert with the rest of the United Kingdom, a key factor in the economic well-being of the area is structured and purposeful collaboration between industry, commerce, the community and providers of education and training. The TEC nucleus Board is now establishing its presence in the area and is raising its understanding of major local concerns.

As a result local business leaders now welcome the opportunity to inject fresh direction and purpose into a local partnership focused upon the following outline mission. The TEC nucleus Board welcomes comments on this outline.

1. To generate a local learning culture which encourages participation in education and training together with associated higher levels of individual achievement.

2. To work with businesses and others in encouraging human resource development through improved in-company training and enhanced education and training opportunities for all employees.

3. To facilitate the transition from education to employment and to co-operate with local authorities in matters such as:

(i) helping to increase the proportion of young people taking up relevant education and/or training, whether full-time or part-time, beyond the age of 16;

(ii) ensuring that every school-leaver who secures a job is also enabled to enjoy structured training;

(iii) helping to improve access to higher education;

(iv) encouraging education industry partnerships;

(v) work-related further education planning and TVEI.

4. To develop local programmes for unemployed people which better meet their needs and which take account of potential job and career opportunities.

5. To assist and co-operate with others, especially local authorities, in regeneration strategies and programmes.

6. To develop a local enterprise culture which builds upon the creative potential of localities.

7. To strive for equal opportunities, particularly for members of the black communities and other ethnic groups, women, people with disabilities, and also for disadvantaged groups.

8. To use an adequate information base when making decisions and giving advice.

9. To establish measures of quality control and assurance which assist the raising of standards in education, training and employment.

CONSULTATION

The TEC's primary customers will be the businesses that operate in the areas and local people. Other major stake-holders include the three local authorities, the supporters of enterprise and providers of vocational education and training.

The local TEC actively wishes to involve and consult:

- companies and employer organisations
- local authorities
- education interests
- trade unions
- community groups
- the voluntary sector
- industry training organisations
- training providers

It therefore intends to hold a number of public consultative meetings over the next few months. These will be publicised through the local media and the TEC nucleus Board invites you to attend.